

Top Secret Recipes

by Todd Wilbur



Top Secret Recipes

version of

Applebee's

Baked French Onion Soup

Don't even try to find this one on the menu at Applebee's, because it isn't there; though it's the most popular soup served each day at this huge restaurant chain. This is the first of several big-time soup clones we'll unveil here in the next few weeks to help get you through the cold winter months. And they're all a cinch to make. Just be sure you have some oven-safe soup bowls for this one, since we'll have to broil it a bit before serving. Under the gooey melted provolone of the original version you get from Applebee's is a unique round crouton that's made from bread similar to a hamburger bun. So that's exactly what we'll use in our clone.

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
6 medium white onions, sliced
8 cups beef broth (Swanson is best)
1 cup water
2 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
5 plain hamburger buns
10 slices provolone cheese
10 teaspoons shredded parmesan cheese

1. Add 3 tablespoons oil to a large soup pot or saucepan over medium/high heat. Add the sliced onions and sauté for 20 minutes until the onions begin to soften and start to become translucent. You don't want them to brown.

2. Add the beef broth, water, salt, garlic powder and black pepper to the pan and bring mixture to a boil. When soup begins to boil, reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes.
 3. To make the croutons cut off the top half of each top of the hamburger bun so that the bread is the same thickness as the bottom half of each bun. Throw the tops away. Now you should have 10 round pieces of bread -- 5 bottom buns, and 5 top buns with the tops cut off. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Place the bread in the the oven directly on the rack and bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until each piece is golden brown and crispy. Set these croutons aside until you need them.
 4. When the soup is done, spoon about 1 cup into an oven-safe bowl. Float a crouton on top of the soup, then place a slice of provolone cheese on top of the crouton. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon of shredded parmesan cheese over the provolone.
 5. Place the bowl into your oven set to high broil. Broil the soup for 5 to 6 minutes or until the cheese is melted and starting to brown (you may need to broil longer if you are making more than one bowl at a time). Sprinkle an additional 1/2 teaspoon of shredded parmesan cheese over the top of the soup and serve. Repeat process to prepare remaining servings.
- (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 10 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Benihana Ginger Salad Dressing

As far as salad dressings go, this is one of the most requested, and tasty. At the Benihana chain of hibachi grill restaurants, you are served a side salad before your meal that is doused with this tangy, slightly sweet, fresh ginger dressing. This *Top Secret Recipes* version of that dressing is a real cinch to make, once you've got the ingredients. Just dump everything into a blender, whiz it, and you're set. Although this recipe is inspired by the many variations of the clone recipe that are floating around (and that I have received by e-mail), you should know that this is an original never-before-published creation that comes closer to the original product than any other version I have seen. See what you think.

1/2 cup minced onion
1/2 cup peanut oil
1/3 cup rice vinegar
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
2 tablespoons minced celery
2 tablespoons ketchup
4 teaspoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons sugar
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend on high speed for about 30 seconds or until all of the ginger is well-pureed. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 1 3/4 cups.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Boston Market Meatloaf

If you already have a recipe that claims to be a clone for this delicious meatloaf...you can now toss it out, purge it from your hard drive, burn all hard copies. No clone recipe that I've found yet -- and there are several circulating -- has come even close to the tender, tasty meatloaf you can get from this popular chain. Don't be fooled! To make a REAL clone, first thing you've got to do is use ground sirloin, just as the restaurant chain does. And then you need to know how to make the special sauce that goes into the meatloaf and on top (no it's not ketchup and it's not V-8). And there's no minced onion in there (just look at it!), or onion soup mix for that matter. So, search no more for the perfect clone of Boston Market's tasty meatloaf. You've now got the result of days and days of vigorous testing. Even if you don't normally enjoy meatloaf, this one you'll be a cravin'.

1 cup tomato sauce
1 1/2 tablespoons Kraft original barbecue sauce
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 1/2 pounds ground sirloin (10% fat)
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
dash garlic powder

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Combine the tomato sauce, barbecue sauce and sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat. Heat the mixture until it begins to bubble, stirring often, then remove it from the heat.
3. In a large bowl, add all but 2 tablespoons of the tomato sauce to the meat. Use a large wooden spoon or your hands to work the sauce into the meat until it is very well combined.
4. Combine the remaining ingredients with the ground sirloin-- flour, salt, onion powder and ground pepper. Use the wooden spoon or your hands to work the spices and flour into the meat.
5. Load the meat into a loaf pan (preferably a meatloaf pan with two sections which allows the fat to drain, but if you don't have one of those a regular loaf pan will work). Wrap foil over the pan and place it into the oven for 30 minutes.
6. After 30 minutes, take the meatloaf from the oven, remove the foil and, if you aren't using a meatloaf pan, drain the fat.
7. Using a knife, slice the meatloaf all the way through into 8 slices while it is still in the pan. This will help to cook the center of the meatloaf. Pour the remaining 2 tablespoons of sauce over the top of the meatloaf, in a stream down the center. Don't spread the sauce.

8. Place the meatloaf back into the oven, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes or until it is done. Remove and allow it to cool for a few minutes before serving. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)

Serves 4.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
California Pizza Kitchen
Dakota Smashed Pea & Barley Soup

Got one of those cool hand blenders? You know, the kind of gadget that used to be pitched on those annoying yet compelling late-night infomercials? It comes in handy for this recipe, which requires the split peas to be smashed into a smooth consistency, just like the original. If you don't have a hand mixer, a standard blender works just fine. This soup is very tasty and very low in fat. And the barley gives it a special chunky consistency and added flavor that isn't found in most pea soups.

2 cups split peas
6 cups water
2 14.5-ounce cans chicken broth (4 cups)
1/3 cup minced onion
1 large clove garlic, minced
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1/4 teaspoon dried parsley
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
dash dried thyme
1/2 cup barley
6 cups water
2 medium carrots, diced (about 1 cup)
1/2 stalk celery, diced (1/4 cup)

Garnish

chopped green onion

1. Rinse and drain the split peas, then add them to a large pot with 6 cups of water, chicken broth, onion, garlic, lemon juice, salt, sugar, parsley, pepper, and thyme. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 75 minutes or until the peas are soft.
2. While the peas are cooking, combine the barley with 6 cups of water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 75 minutes or until the barley is soft and most of the water has been absorbed.
3. When the split pea mixture has become a thick soup, use a handheld blender to puree the peas until the mixture is smooth. You may also use a standard blender or food processor for this step, pureeing the soup in batches. Alternately, if you like, you may skip this step, keeping the soup rather chunky. It's still good this way, just not as smooth as the real thing.
4. Drain the barley mixture in a sieve or colander and add it to the split pea mixture. Add the

carrots and celery and continue to simmer the soup for 15 to 30 minutes or until the carrots are tender. Stir occasionally. Turn off the heat, cover the soup, and let it sit for 10 to 15 minutes before serving. Garnish each serving with a little chopped green onion.
(<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 8 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Chevys
Garlic Mashed Potatoes

This easy-to-clone dish comes with many of the tasty entrees at the restaurant chain or can be ordered up, pronto, on the side. It's a nice clone to have around since it goes well with so many dishes, Mexican or otherwise. Just give yourself the time to bake and cool the potatoes. Be here at TSR next week for a big clone request from the same "always fresh ingredients" Mexican food chain. It's for that muy delicioso salsa, baby! Si, si, si. See you then.

4 medium/large russet potatoes
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon minced fresh garlic (3-4 cloves)
3/4 cup water
1/2 cup cream
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
 2. Bake the potatoes by first rubbing them lightly with oil and then baking them in the preheated oven for 1 hour until they are tender. Cool.
 3. Mash potatoes and remove about half of the skin. You want to leave the rest in.
 4. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat, then add garlic and saute for 5 minutes.
 5. Add the remaining ingredients to the pan and cook for 5-10 minutes while stirring often until garlic mashed potatoes are very hot. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Serves 4.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Chili's Calypso Cooler

Ever order one of those expensive specialty drinks off those shiny, full-color restaurant table-stand cards and wish you had the recipe? Well, this is one of those drinks, off of one of those cards, from the popular Chili's chain. It's a great one to make while the weather's still hot (or anytime), and can be made in a much larger quantity for a party-time punch bowl...with a punch.

2 shots Captain Morgan Spiced Rum
1 shot peach Schnapps
1 shot grenadine
1 cup orange juice
ice
orange wedge
maraschino cherry

1. Combine the rum, peach schnapps orange juice and grenadine in a shaker. Shake well.
 2. Pour drink over ice cubes or crushed ice in a big glass. Add an orange wedge and a cherry.
- (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes one drink.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Chili's
Southwestern Vegetable Soup

If you like a soup that's packed with veggies, that's low in fat, and has some of that Southwestern zing to it, this is the one for you. Just toss all the ingredients in a pot and simmer. Garnish with some shredded cheese and crumbled tortillas, and prepare to take the chill off.

6 cups chicken broth (Swanson is best)
1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes, with juice
1 cup water
1 cup canned dark red kidney beans, with liquid
1 cup frozen yellow cut corn
1 cup frozen cut green beans
1 4-ounce can diced green chilies
1/2 cup diced Spanish onion
1/2 cup tomato sauce
6 corn tortillas, minced
1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
dash garlic powder

Garnish

1 cup grated cheddar/jack cheese blend
1 cup crumbled corn tortilla chips

1. Combine all the soup ingredients in a large saucepan or soup pot over high heat. Be sure to mince the corn tortillas into small pieces with a sharp knife before adding them to the soup.
2. Bring soup to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until the soup has thickened and tortilla pieces have mostly dissolved.
3. To serve soup ladle 1 1/2 cups into a bowl. Sprinkle a heaping tablespoon of the grated cheddar/jack cheese blend over the top of the soup, and then a heaping tablespoon of crumbled

corn tortilla chips over the cheese. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 6 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Oatmeal Raisin
Big Cookies

Grandma's Cookie Company was founded back in 1914 by Foster Wheeler, but it wasn't until 1977 that the company introduced the popular Big Cookie. This large, soft cookie comes two-to-a-pack and is offered in several varieties, including oatmeal raisin. Now you can bake up a couple batches all your own with this kitchen clone. Just be sure not to over do it in the oven. You want these cookies soft and chewy when cool -- just like a happy grandma would make 'em -
- so take them out when they are just beginning to turn light brown around the edges.

1/2 cup raisins
1/3 cup water
1/2 cup vegetable shortening
1 egg
1 1/2 cups dark brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 cups oats (not instant)
2 teaspoons baking soda
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup raisins

1. Preheat oven to 275 degrees.
 2. Combine raisins with water in a food processor and blend on high speed for about 1 minute or until very smooth.
 3. Combine this raisin puree with the vegetable shortening, egg, brown sugar and vanilla in a large bowl. Mix well with electric mixer until smooth.
 4. In a separate bowl, combine the flour with the oats, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Pour this dry mixture into the wet mixture and mix well until ingredients are incorporated. Mix in raisins.
 5. Roll 3 tablespoon portions of the dough into a ball in your hands and press to 1/2-inch flat on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 18-20 minutes. Be careful not to overcook, or the cookies will not be chewy. Store in a sealed container. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 16 to 18 cookies.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Hard Rock Cafe
Cole Slaw

If you want the authentic Hard Rock Cafe Pig Sandwich experience, you just have to serve your clone of that pulled-pork sandwich with this creamy, delicious cole slaw on the side. Even if you don't whip up the sandwich, you'll want to dive into a batch of this secret slaw. It's just too easy to make, and *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* isn't on tonight. But be sure to let the stuff hibernate in the fridge for a day or two after you toss it. That's the only way to get the flavors up to dancing the perfect tastebud mambo.

1 1/3 cups mayonnaise
3 tablespoons white vinegar
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
2 tablespoons milk
dash salt
8 cups chopped cabbage (1 head)
1/2 cup shredded carrot

1. Combine all ingredients except the cabbage and carrots in a large bowl and blend until smooth with an electric mixer.
 2. Add cabbage and carrots and toss well.
 3. Cover and chill overnight in the refrigerator. The flavors fully develop after 24 to 48 hours. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Serves 6 to 8 as a side dish.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Hard Rock Cafe
Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup

It's the chunkiest dang chicken soup you'll ever slurp down and it comes from the first worldwide theme eatery and hip hangout. Crank up the rock 'n roll and throw all this good stuff into a pot and enjoy this final secret recipe in our series of mouth-watering soup clones. Bah-bye winter!

1 pound chicken breast fillets
1 pound chicken thigh fillets

vegetable oil
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup diced celery
4 cups chicken stock
2 cups water
1 cup sliced carrot
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper
1/2 teaspoon minced fresh parsley
2 cups egg noodles

Garnish

minced fresh parsley

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Rub a little vegetable oil over the surface of each piece of chicken and arrange them on a baking sheet. Bake for 25 minutes. Remove the chicken from the oven when it's done and set it aside to cool.
3. Melt the butter in a large saucepan or dutch oven over medium heat. Sauté the onion and celery in the saucepan for just 4 to 5 minutes. You don't want to brown the veggies.
4. Dice the chicken and add it to the pot along with the remaining ingredients, except the noodles.
5. Bring the soup to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes or until the carrots are soft.
6. Add the noodles and simmer for an additional 15 minutes, or until the noodles are tender. Serve with a pinch of minced fresh parsley sprinkled on top. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 6 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Hot Dog on a Stick
Hot Dog

One hot summer day in 1946 Dave Barham was inspired to dip a hot dog into his mother's cornbread batter, then deep fry it to a golden brown. The first Hot Dog on a Stick was born, and Dave soon found a quaint Santa Monica, California location near the beach to offer his new creation along with a tall glass of ice-cold lemonade and mustard on the side.

The chain uses only turkey dogs for this treat, so we'll do the same. Just be sure you find the shorter dogs, not "bun-length." This time size *does* matter. For the stick, simply snag some of the disposable wood chopsticks from a local Chinese or Japanese food restaurant next time you're there.

2 cups flour
3/4 cup corn meal
1/2 cup sugar
1 3/4 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 3/4 cups fat-free milk
2 egg yolks, slightly beaten
10 turkey hot dogs
8-10 cups of vegetable oil
5 pairs of chopsticks

1. Preheat oil in a deep pan or fryer to 375 degrees.
 2. Combine the flour, corn meal, sugar, salt and baking soda in a large bowl.
 3. Combine the milk and egg yolks to the dry ingredients and mix with an electric mixer on high speed until batter is smooth.
 4. Dry off the hot dogs with a paper towel. Jab the thin end of a single chopstick about halfway into the end of each hot dog.
 5. When the oil is hot, tip the bowl of batter so that you can completely coat each hot dog. Roll the hot dog in the batter until it is entirely covered with batter.
 6. Hold the hot dog up by the stick and let some of the batter drip off. Quickly submerge the hot dog in the oil and spin it slowly so that the coating cooks evenly. After about 20 seconds you can use a lid to the deep fryer or pan to put weight on the stick, keeping the hot dog fully immersed in the oil. You can cook a couple dogs at a time this way. Cook for 5-6 minutes or until coating is dark brown. Turn them once or twice as they cook. Drain on paper towels while cooling, and repeat with remaining hot dogs. (www.topsecretrecipes.com)
- Makes 10 hot dogs.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
I.H.O.P.
Country Griddle Cakes

This nationwide chain, which is known for it's big bargain breakfasts, serves an impressive number of non-breakfast items as well. In 1997, I.H.O.P. dished out over 6 million pounds of french fries and over half a million gallons of soft drinks. But it's the Country Griddle Cakes on the breakfast menu that inspired this Top Secret Recipe. The unique flavor and texture of this clone comes from the Cream of Wheat in the batter. Now you can have your pancakes, and eat your cereal too.

nonstick spray
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups buttermilk
1/3 cup instant Cream of Wheat (dry)
1 egg

1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt

1. Preheat a skillet over medium heat. Apply nonstick spray.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl with a mixer set on high speed. Mix until smooth.
3. Pour the batter by 1/3-cup portions into the hot pan and cook pancakes for 1-2 minutes per side or until brown. Repeat with remaining batter. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 8-10 pancakes.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Pancakes from
International House of Pancakes

Even though the early press runs of *Top Secret Recipes* excluded buttermilk in this recipe -- a very important ingredient if you really want pourable batter -- many figured out the missing ingredient on their own and the error was quickly corrected in later copies. Now we just like to call those copies of the book the "Collector's Editions." For any of you who were lucky enough to get one of the "Collector's Editions" we'd liked to say "Congratulations!" Now here's the recipe, in its entirety, to make pancakes just like those served every day at IHOP.

Nonstick Spray
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg
1 1/4 cups buttermilk
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1 heaping teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 cup cooking oil
pinch of salt

1. Preheat a skillet over medium heat. Use a pan with a nonstick surface or apply a little nonstick spray.
2. In a blender or with a mixer, combine all of the remaining ingredients until smooth.
3. Pour the batter by spoonfuls into the hot pan, forming 5-inch circles.
4. When the edges appear to harden, flip the pancakes. They should be golden brown.
5. Cook pancakes on the other side for same amount of time, until golden brown.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Kellogg's Cocoa Rice Krispies Treats

It's the Rice Krispies Treat for all you chocolate lovers. By simply replacing regular Rice Krispies with Kellogg's Cocoa Krispies, then adding a bit of cocoa to the recipe, we can clone the exact flavor of the product you otherwise have to buy in boxes in the grocery store. This recipe makes 16 of the crunchy brown bars, or the equivalent of two boxes of the real thing.

3 tablespoons margarine
1/4 teaspoon salt
5 cups miniature marshmallows
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
4 teaspoons cocoa
6 cups Cocoa Krispies cereal
non-stick cooking spray

1. Combine margarine and salt in a large saucepan over low heat.
2. When margarine has melted, add marshmallows and vanilla and stir until marshmallows have melted. Add cocoa and stir well. Remove from heat.
3. Add Cocoa Krispies and stir until the cereal is well-coated with the melted marshmallow mixture.
4. Spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with a light coating of non-stick cooking spray. Pour the mixture into the dish and, using wax paper or lightly greased hands, press down until it's flat in the dish. Cool. Slice into 16 bars. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 16 bars.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
KFC
Cole Slaw

If you've ever seen a clone recipe for KFC Cole Slaw floating around on the Internet, it probably looks like this. That's because this formula has become one of the most copied & pasted recipes from the first book, "Top Secret Recipes." It's also one of the most requested recipes on the TSR Message Board. So, to fulfill all those requests, and to stake claim to a recipe that's rarely sourced as a TSR original, here's the killer recipe to clone the world's best slaw. And, because I love to out-clone the "copycats", I'm going to take it one step further. Tune in next week for an original version of this clone recipe that tastes just like the real thing but includes only five ingredients...and is completely fat free! Don't believe it? Be here next Monday.

8 cups finely chopped cabbage (about 1 head)
1/4 cup shredded carrot (1 medium carrot)

2 tablespoons minced onion
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup milk
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup buttermilk
1 1/2 tablespoons white vinegar
2 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Be sure cabbage and carrots are chopped up into very fine pieces (about the size of rice).
 2. Combine the sugar, salt, pepper, milk, mayonnaise, buttermilk, vinegar, and lemon juice in a large bowl and beat until smooth.
 3. Add the cabbage, carrots, and onion, and mix well.
 4. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.
- Serves 10-12. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)

Top Secret Recipes
version of
KFC
Macaroni & Cheese

Here's a clone for another of KFC's famous side dishes. We'll use easy-to-melt Velveeta as the main ingredient for the cheese sauce with its very smooth texture. Then a bit of cheddar cheese is added to give the sauce a sharp cheddary zing like the original. It's a very simple recipe that will take only 15 minutes to prepare. That's great news if you're a lazy cook like me who wants to dig right into the tasty vittles.

6 cups water
1 1/3 cups elbow macaroni
4 ounces Velveeta cheese
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
2 tablespoons whole milk
1/4 teaspoon salt

1. Bring water to a boil over high heat in a medium saucepan. Add elbow macaroni to the water and cook it for 10 to 12 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally.
 2. While the macaroni is boiling, prepare the cheese sauce by combining the remaining ingredients in a small saucepan over low heat. Stir often as the cheese melts into a smooth consistency.
 3. When the macaroni is done, strain it and then pour it back into the same pan, without the water.
 4. Add the cheese sauce to the pan and stir gently until the macaroni is well-coated with the cheese. Serve immediately while hot. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes about 3 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
KFC
Potato Salad

Here's a simple clone for the potato salad that is purchased as a side dish from America's largest fast food chicken chain. Some of the skin is left on the potatoes in the real thing, so you don't have to peel them too thoroughly (great news for lazy cooks like me!). Just be sure to chop your potatoes into cubes that are approximately 1/2-inch thick, and then let the salad marinate for at least 4 hours so that the flavors can properly develop. If you let the salad chill overnight, it tastes even better. Tune in for more KFC clone recipes each week this month!

2 pounds russet potatoes
1 cup mayonnaise
4 teaspoons sweet pickle relish
4 teaspoons sugar
2 teaspoons minced white onion
2 teaspoons prepared mustard
1 teaspoon vinegar
1 teaspoon minced celery
1 teaspoon diced pimentos
1/2 teaspoon shredded carrot
1/4 teaspoon dried parsley
1/4 teaspoon pepper
dash salt

1. Lightly peel the potatoes (you don't have to get all of the skin off) then chop them into bite-size pieces and boil in 6 cups of boiling, salted water for 7-10 minutes. The potato chunks should be tender, yet slightly tough in the middle when done. Drain and rinse potatoes with cold water.
 2. In a medium bowl, combine remaining ingredients and whisk until smooth.
 3. Poured drained potatoes into a large bowl. Pour the dressing over the potatoes and mix until well-combined.
 4. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours. Overnight is best. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 6 cups (about 8 servings).

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Kraft
Shake'n Bake
(Original)

Need a recipe that copies Shake'n Bake in a pinch? Or maybe you don't feel like coughing up the dough for the real thing. Here's the TSR solution for a quick clone that will give you the same texture and flavor of Kraft Shake'n Bake using very common ingredients. You may notice the color is a bit different in this clone when compared to the real thing. That's because this recipe doesn't include beet powder -- a hard-to-find ingredient that lends a dark orange tint to the original. But sink your teeth into the chicken (baked the same way as described on the Shake'n Bake box) and you'll swear it's the same stuff.

1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon corn flake crumbs
2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon sugar
scant 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
scant 1/4 teaspoon onion powder

1. Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and stir to combine.
2. Prepare chicken following the same technique as described on the box of the original mix using 2 1/2 lb. of bone-in chicken (6 to 8 pieces, with or without skin) or 2 lb. boneless skinless chicken breast halves Preheat your oven to 400 degrees, then moisten the chicken with water. Use a large plastic bag for the coating and use the same steps as described on the original package:

"*Shake* moistened chicken, 1 to 2 pieces at a time, in shaker bag with coating mixture. Discard any remaining mixture and bag. Bake at 400 degrees in ungreased or foil-lined 15x10x1-inch baking pan until cooked through --
BONE-IN: 45 minutes/BONELESS: 20 minutes"

Serves 4. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Lawry's
Seasoned Salt

"Shake on meat, poultry, fish, and eggs. Accent vegetables, salads and popcorn. Use while cooking, or at the table." reads the label of one of America's most popular spice blends. This seven-ingredient clone of Lawry's Seasoned Salt can be made in a small bowl, but is best used when poured into an old spice bottle that you've cleaned out and saved. You've got one of those somewhere, right?

2 tablespoons salt
2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon turmeric
1/4 teaspoon onion powder
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon cornstarch

1. Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and mix well.
 2. Pour blend into an empty spice bottle to store. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 1/4 cup.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Lone Star Steakhouse Baked Sweet Potato

It saddles on up next to your entree at this huge steakhouse chain, but it's not what it claims to be. Sure, the menu says "baked sweet potato," but you're actually getting a sweet and tender red-skinned yam underneath all that yummy melted butter and cinnamon/sugar. And don't just get any yam for this top secret clone. You want to use garnet yams, if you have a choice. Then be sure to cook them long enough that the sugar in the yams begins to squirt out and burn in a couple of spots. Each yam should be tender, but not mushy. The skin on the outside will turn from red to greyish-brown, and inside it will be a hearty shade of black.

4 garnet yams
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 cup whipped butter

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bake yams for 1 1/2 to 2 hours. When they are done, they will be very soft in the center, and you will see liquid from the potato oozing out and charring. When the

potato is sliced open, the inside of the skin will be charred black from the caramelizing sugar in the potato. This is a perfectly cooked potato.

3. To serve, slice a potato down the center. Add two tablespoons of whipped butter, then sprinkle some cinnamon/sugar over the top. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)

Makes 4 servings.

Top Secret Recipes version of **Lone Star Steakhouse Chili**

When the weather gets cold it's time to fire up the stovetop. This chain makes a tasty chili that warms the bones on a nippy fall day. This clone recipe is easy-to-make, low-fat and delicious. And if it's super brisk outside, you might want to add an additional tablespoon of diced jalapeno to aggressively stoke those internal flames.

1 pound ground beef
1 diced onion
1 tablespoon diced fresh jalapeno pepper
1 15-ounce can kidney beans with liquid
1 14.5-ounce can peeled diced tomatoes
1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
1 cup water
1 tablespoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 bay leaf

Garnish

grated cheddar cheese
diced onion
canned whole jalapeno chili peppers

1. Brown ground beef in a large saucepan over medium heat. Drain fat.
2. Add onion and pepper and sauté for about two minutes.
3. Add remaining ingredients and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Serve one cup in a bowl with the optional cheese, diced onion and whole jalapeno garnish on top.
(<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes 4 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Mimi's Cafe Carrot Raisin Bread

It's dark, moist and delicious. And it comes in a bread basket to your table at this French-themed west coast casual restaurant. Now the tastiest carrot bread ever can be yours to create at home with a couple of grated carrots, molasses, raisins and chopped walnuts. You'll be baking this one in the oven for at least an hour. That should be enough time to warm up the house and send amazing smells wafting through every room. Line the carpet with newspaper to catch the family drool.

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup vegetable oil
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
3 eggs
1/4 cup molasses
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup shredded carrot
1 cup raisins
3/4 cup chopped walnuts

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
 2. Combine flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a large mixing bowl.
 3. In another bowl, combine oil, sugar, eggs, molasses, and vanilla with an electric mixer. Add shredded carrot and mix. Add raisins and walnuts and mix well by hand.
 4. Pour flour mixture into the other ingredients and stir until combined.
 5. Pour batter into two ungreased 8-inch loaf pans. Bake for 60 minutes, or until done. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 2 loaves.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Mimi's Cafe
French Market Onion Soup

You might not imagine a tough World War II flying ace would open a restaurant called "Mimi's," but that's exactly what happened in the 70's. Arthur J. Simms flew spy missions over France during the war and helped liberate a small French town near Versailles. After the war Arthur ran the commissary at MGM studios in Hollywood, stuffing the bellies of big-time celebs like Judy Garland, Clark Gable and Mickey Rooney. He later joined his son Tom in several restaurant ventures including one called "French Quarter" in West Hollywood. This was the prototype for the French-themed Mimi's Cafe. In 1978, the first Mimi's opened in Anaheim, California. Today there's over 40 Mimi's in the chain with a new one opening every other week; all of them serving this amazing onion soup that can now be part of your culinary repertoire.

Oui!

1/4 cup butter
3 medium white onions, sliced
3 14-ounce cans beef broth (Swanson is best)
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
3 tablespoons Kraft grated parmesan cheese
6 to 12 slices French bread (baguette)
6 slices Swiss cheese
6 slices mozzarella cheese
6 tablespoons shredded parmesan cheese

1. Sauté onions in melted butter in a large soup pot or saucepan for 15 to 20 minutes or until onions begin to brown and turn transparent.
 2. Add beef broth, salt and garlic powder to onions. Bring mixture to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 1 hour. Add the grated parmesan cheese in the last 10 minutes of cooking the soup.
 3. When soup is done, preheat oven to 350 degrees and toast the French bread slices for about 10 to 12 minutes or until they begin to brown. When bread is done, set oven to broil.
 4. Build each serving of soup by spooning about 1 cup of soup into an oven-safe bowl. Float a toasted slice or two of bread on top of the soup, then add a slice of Swiss cheese on top of that. Place a slice of mozzarella on next and sprinkle 1 tablespoon of shredded parmesan cheese over the top of the other cheeses.
 5. Place the soup bowl on a baking sheet and broil for 5 to 6 minutes or until the cheese begins to brown. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 6 servings.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Olive Garden
Pasta e Fagioli

It's amazing how many lousy clones for this delicious chili-like soup from Olive Garden are floating around on the Web. Some are shared on message boards, others are displayed on sites in a collection of "actual restaurant recipes" (yeah, right!). But they all leave out obvious ingredients you can see, like the carrots, ground beef, or two kinds of beans. Others don't get the pasta right -- it's obviously ditali pasta (short little tubes). Then there's the recipe that really squeezed the seeds from my gourd -- one that's floating around in MasterCook format that lists "Top Secret Recipes" as the source. But, wait a minute! I've never before created a clone for this dish -- not here on the site, and not in any book. So, after logging some time over a chopping block, an open flame, and a couple tasty glasses of Merlot, out popped this puppy. And this is the one, kitchen cloners! If you want the taste of Pasta e Fagioli at home, this is the only recipe that will fool in a side-by-side taste test. Accept no other imitation imitation!

1 pound ground beef
1 small onion, diced (1 cup)
1 large carrot, julienned (1 cup)
3 stalks celery, chopped (1 cup)
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 14.5-ounce cans diced tomatoes
1 15-ounce can red kidney beans (with liquid)
1 15-ounce can great northern beans (with liquid)
1 15-ounce can tomato sauce
1 12-ounce can V-8 juice
1 tablespoon white vinegar
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon basil
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon thyme
1/2 pound (1/2 pkg.) ditali pasta

1. Brown the ground beef in a large saucepan or pot over medium heat. Drain off most of the fat.
2. Add onion, carrot, celery and garlic and sauté for 10 minutes.
3. Add remaining ingredients, except pasta, and simmer for 1 hour.
4. About 50 minutes into simmer time, cook the pasta in 1 1/2 to 2 quarts of boiling water over high heat. Cook for 10 minutes or just until pasta is *al dente*, or slightly tough. Drain.
5. Add the pasta to the large pot of soup. Simmer for 5-10 minutes and serve.

(<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Serves 8.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Outback Steakhouse Caesar Salad Dressing

Ask and you shall receive. To answer many requests, I've whipped up this killer clone for the mouth-watering caesar salad dressing from America's favorite steakhouse chain. You can't buy it in the stores, but now you can make it from scratch in mere minutes. Best of all, this dressing keeps for weeks and weeks in the fridge in a covered container (if it's even around that long).

1 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup egg substitute
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon anchovy paste
2 cloves garlic, pressed
2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon coarse ground pepper
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon dried parsley flakes, crushed fine

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl. Use an electric mixer to beat ingredients for about 1 minute.
 2. Cover bowl and chill for several hours so that flavors can develop.
- (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Makes approximately 2 cups.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Snapple Iced Tea
(Lemon Flavor)

Here's a quick and easy recipe for the brand of ice tea that hit the market and quickly blew away competitors Lipton and Nestea. Between 1988 and 1992 Snapple tea sales increased a whopping 1,300 percent. And if you like Snapple ice tea, you'll find this recipe will save you some cash. While a 16-ounce bottle of Snapple tea costs around \$1.00, this top secret clone cost about 15 cents -- for the same amount.

2 quarts (8 cups) water
3 Lipton tea bags (orange pekoe and pekoe cut black tea blend)
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Boil the water in a large saucepan over high heat.
 2. When the water comes to a rapid boil, turn off the heat, put the tea bags into the water, and cover.
 3. After the tea has steeped about 1 hour, pour the sugar into a 2-quart pitcher, then add the tea. The tea should still be warm, so the sugar will dissolve easily.
 4. Add the lemon juice. Chill. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 2 quarts.

(Check the book *More Top Secret Recipes* for 4 other flavors of this clone for Snapple Iced Tea, including orange, strawberry, cranberry and diet lemon!)

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Sonic Cherry Limeade

Here's the signature drink from the chain that's reviving the drive-up burger joint, just like a scene out of American Graffiti or Happy Days. At this growing chain you pull up to a stall and servers bring food out to your car as they did in the 40's and 50's. This recipe makes a simple old-fashioned drink by combining 7-Up with cherry juice and some wedges of lime. Very refreshing! (according to Potsy).

- 1 cup Sprite
1/4 cup cherry juice (Libby is good)
2-3 lime wedges (each 1/8 lime)

1. Pour Sprite into a glass over ice.
 2. Add cherry juice.
 3. Add 2-3 lime wedges, squeezing slightly before dropping each one in.
- (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
Serves 1.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
The Soup Nazi's
Cream of Sweet Potato Soup

New Yorkers have lined up around the block for years now to get a hot cup of Al Yeganeh's delicious soup at Soup Kitchen International. Many are familiar with the demands: "Pick the soup you want!", "Have your money ready!", and "Move to the extreme left after ordering!"

Customers know if they don't stick to the rules, they'll be quickly scolded and may not get served; even after waiting for as long as two hours to get to the front of the line. This is precisely

how the non-smiling Yeganeh was portrayed by actor Larry Thomas in *Seinfeld* episode number 115, when he forever became known as the "Soup Nazi." (That's the real guy in the picture, as cheerful as ever.)

In response to many e-mails over the last several weeks, TSR will be celebrating the final days of TV's "show about nothing", with a special tribute. Starting this week, and until the final show on May 14, TSR will present a new weekly kitchen clone for the Soup Nazi's most popular creations. I'll kick it all off with this Cream of Sweet Potato Soup, and the next several recipes will come each Thursday night (including this week), until *Seinfeld* is no more. In addition to the recipes, I'll share more about the Soup Nazi, including my very brief interview with the guy, which ended when I was sternly reprimanded. But at least I still got my soup. And just like in the show, it was indescribably delicious.

4 sweet potatoes (about 1 pound each)

8 cups water

1/3 cup butter

1/2 cup tomato sauce

2 tablespoons half and half

2 teaspoons salt

1/8 teaspoon pepper

dash thyme

1 cup cashews (split in half)

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Bake the sweet potatoes for 45 minutes or until they are soft. Cool the potatoes until they can be handled.

2. Peel away the skin, then put the potatoes into a large bowl. Mash the potatoes for 15-20 seconds, but you don't need to mash them until they are entirely smooth.

3. Spoon the mashed sweet potato into a large saucepan over medium/high heat, add the remaining ingredients and stir to combine.

4. When the soup begins to boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 50-60 minutes. Cashews should be soft. Serve hot with an attitude. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)

Makes 6-8 servings.

Top Secret Recipes

version of

Swiss Miss

Fat-Free Tapioca Pudding

When the first instant hot cocoa mix was developed in the fifties, it was available only to the airlines in individual portions for passengers and was called Brown Swiss. This mix was so popular that the company packaged it for sale in the grocery stores and changed the name to Swiss Miss. In the seventies, the first Swiss Miss Puddings were introduced and quickly became the leader of dairy case puddings. When the fat-free versions of the puddings were introduced some 23 years later, they, too, would become a popular favorite.

No sugar needs to be added to this recipe that recreates one of the best-tasting brands of fat-free pudding on the market. The condensed milk is enough to sweeten the pudding; plus it provides a creamy consistency, which, along with the cornstarch, helps replace fat found in the full-fat version of this tasty tapioca treat. It's a simple recipe to make and you won't even "miss" the fat.

2 tablespoons cornstarch
2 1/2 cups fat-free milk
1/2 cup sweetened condensed skim milk
dash salt
2 1/2 tablespoons instant tapioca
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Combine the cornstarch with the fat-free milk in a medium saucepan and whisk thoroughly to dissolve the cornstarch.
2. Add the condensed milk, salt, and tapioca to the pan. Stir until smooth and then set the pan aside for 5 minutes.
3. After 5 minutes, bring the mixture to a boil over medium/low heat, stirring constantly until it thickens, then cover and remove from the heat. Let the pudding sit, covered, for 20 minutes.
4. Stir in the vanilla, then transfer the pudding to serving cups. Cover the cups with plastic wrap and let them chill for at least 2 to 3 hours before serving.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size – 3/4 cup

Total servings – 4

Fat (per serving) – 0g

Calories (per serving) – 140

Top Secret Recipes

version of

Original Tommy's World Famous Hamburgers

This clone recipe may be for the whole hamburger, but anybody who knows about Tommy's goes there for the chili -- and that's the part of this clone they really want. That's also the part that required the most kitchen sleuthing. Turn out it's an old chili con carne recipe created back in 1946 by Tommy's founder, Tommy Koulax, for his first hamburger stand on the corner of Beverly and Rampart Boulevards in Los Angeles. Adding the right combination of water and flour and broth and spices to the meat we can create a thick tomato-less chili sauce worthy of the gajillions of southern California college students that make late-night Tommy's runs a four-year habit. And if you don't live near one of the two-dozen Tommy's outlets, you can still get a gallon of Tommy's famous chili shipped to you. But I hope you really dig the stuff: You'll shell out around 70 bucks for the dry ice packaging and overnight shipping. And don't expect to see the ingredients on the label since the chili comes packed in a gallon-size mustard jug.

Chili

**1 pound ground beef (not lean)*
1/4 cup flour plus 1 1/4 cups flour
1 1/3 cups beef broth
4 cups water
3 tablespoons chili powder
2 tablespoon grated (and then chopped) carrot
1 tablespoon white vinegar
2 teaspoons dried minced onion
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder**

**3 pounds ground beef
8 hamburger buns
16 slices Kraft cheddar cheese Singles
1/2 cup diced onion
32 to 40 hamburger pickles (slices)
8 slices large beefsteak tomato (1/2-inch thick)
1/4 cup yellow mustard**

- 1. Prepare the chili by first browning the meat in a large saucepan over medium heat. Crumble the meat as it browns. When the meat has been entirely cooked (7 to 10 minutes), pour the meat into a strainer over a large cup or saucepan. Let the fat drip out of the meat for about 5 minutes, then return the meat back to the first saucepan. Cover and set aside.**
- 2. With the fat from the meat, we will now make a roux -- a French contribution to thicker sauces and gravies usually made with fat and flour. Heat the drippings in a saucepan over medium heat (you should have drained off around 1/2 cup of the stuff). When the fat is hot, add 1/4 cup flour to the pan and stir well. Reduce heat to medium/low, and continue to heat the roux, stirring often until it is a rich caramel color. This should take from 10 to 15 minutes. Add the beef broth to the pan and stir. Remove from heat.**
- 3. Meanwhile, back at the other pan, add the water to the beef, then whisk in the remaining 1 1/4 cups flour. Add the roux/broth mixture and the other chili ingredients and whisk until blended. Make sure your grated carrot is chopped up to the size of rice before you add it.**
- 4. Crank the heat up to medium/high. Stir often until you see bubbles forming on the surface of the chili. Turn the heat down to medium/low, and continue to simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, or until thick. The chili should be calmly bubbling like lava as it simmers. When it's done cooking, take the chili off the heat, cover it, and let it sit for 30 minutes to an hour before using it on the burgers. It should thicken to a tasty brown paste as it sits.**
- 5. To make your hamburgers, you'll first divide 3 pounds of hamburger into 16 portions of 3 ounces each. Grill the burgers on in a hot skillet or on an indoor griddle for 4 to 5 minutes per side or until done. Use some salt and pepper on each patty.**
- 6. Build the burgers by lightly toasting the faces of the hamburger buns. Turn them over into a hot skillet or a griddle on medium heat.**
- 7. Place one patty onto the bottom bun.**
- 8. Position two slices of cheese on the meat.**
- 9. Place another beef patty on the cheese.**
- 10. Spoon about 1/3 cup of chili onto the beef patty.**

11. Sprinkle about 1 tablespoon of diced onion onto the chili.
 12. Arrange 4 to 5 pickle slices on the onion.
 13. Place a thick slice of tomato on next.
 14. Spread mustard over the face of the top bun and top off your hamburger by turning this bun over onto the tomato. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Makes 8 burgers. (6 cups of chili.)

***Tidbits**

Make sure the ground beef you use has a fat content of at least 20 percent. This way you'll be sure to get enough fat to make the roux.

Top Secret Recipes
version of
Tony Roma's
Baked Potato Soup

Menu Description: "A house specialty full of baked potatoes and topped with Cheddar cheese, bacon and green onions."

The thick-and-creamy texture and rich taste of Tony Roma's best-selling soup can be easily cloned with basic ingredients. This TSR version is thickened with a little flour, some half-and-half and, most notably, instant mashed potatoes. Give yourself an hour to bake the potatoes and around 30 minutes to prepare the soup. Garnish each serving with shredded cheese, crumbled bacon and green onions and you will have a home kitchen Tony Roma's recreation that will surely impress.

2 medium potatoes (about 2 cups chopped)
3 tablespoons butter
1 cup diced white onion
2 tablespoons flour
4 cups chicken stock
2 cups water
1/4 cup cornstarch
1 1/2 cups instant mashed potatoes
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon basil
1/8 teaspoon thyme
1 cup half and half

Garnish

1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1/4 cup crumbled cooked bacon
2 green onions, chopped (green part only)

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees and bake the potatoes or 1 hour or until done. When potatoes have cooked remove them from the oven to cool.
 2. As potatoes cool prepare soup by melting butter in a large saucepan, and sauté onion until light brown. Add the flour to the onions and stir to make a roux.
 3. Add stock, water, cornstarch, mashed potatoes, and spices to the pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes.
 4. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out contents with a large spoon. Discard skin. Chop baked potato with a large knife to make chunks that are about 1/2-inch in size.
 5. Add chopped baked potato and half-and-half to the saucepan, bring soup back to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer the soup for another 15 minutes or until it is thick.
 6. Spoon about 1 1/2 cups of soup into a bowl and top with about a tablespoon of shredded cheddar cheese, a half tablespoon of crumbled bacon and a teaspoon or so of chopped green onion. Repeat for remaining servings. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)
- Serves 6 to 8.

Top Secret Recipes version of **Wendy's Chili**

Here's a favorite recipe for chili that clones the stuff served at the Wendy's chain. Dave Thomas, Wendy's founder, has been serving this chili since 1969, the year the first Wendy's opened its doors. Over the years the recipe has changed a bit, but this version here is an amazing copy of the version of chili served in the early 90's. Try topping it with some chopped onion and cheddar cheese, as you can request in the restaurant.

2 pounds ground beef
One 29-ounce can tomato sauce
One 29-ounce can kidney beans (with liquid)
One 29-ounce can pinto beans (with liquid)
1 cup diced onion (1 medium onion)
1/2 cup diced green chili (2 chilies)
1/4 cup diced celery (1 stalk)
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
2 teaspoons cumin powder
3 tablespoons chili powder
1 1/2 teaspoons black pepper
2 teaspoons salt
2 cups water

1. Brown the ground beef in a skillet over medium heat; drain off the fat.
2. Using a fork, crumble the cooked beef into pea-size pieces.
3. In a large pot, combine the beef plus all the remaining ingredients, and bring to a simmer over low heat. Cook, stirring every 15 minutes, for 2 to 3 hours. (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)

Makes about 12 servings.

Tidbits

For spicier chili, add 1/2 teaspoon more black pepper.

For much spicier chili, add 1 teaspoon black pepper and a tablespoon cayenne pepper.

And for a real stomach stinger, add 5 or 6 sliced jalapeno peppers to the pot.

Leftovers can be frozen for several months.

Top Secret Recipes version of Wendy's **Spicy Chicken Fillet Sandwich**

There once was a time when Wendy's offered this sandwich for a "limited-time-only." Apparently the tasty zing from this breaded chicken sandwich won it many loyal customers and a permanent place on the fast-food chain's menu. Now you can recreate the spicy kick of the original with a secret blend of spices in the chicken's crispy coating. Follow the same stacking order as the original, and you've just made 4 sandwich clones at a fraction of the cost of the real thing.

6-8 cups vegetable oil
1/3 cup Frank's Original Red Hot Pepper Sauce
2/3 cup water
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 1/2 teaspoons salt
4 teaspoons cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
1 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
4 chicken breast fillets
4 plain hamburger buns
8 teaspoons mayonnaise
4 lettuce leaves
4 tomato slices

1. Preheat 6-8 cups of oil in a deep fryer to 350 degrees.
3. Combine the pepper sauce and water in a small bowl.
4. Combine the flour, salt, cayenne pepper, black pepper, onion powder, paprika and garlic powder in another shallow bowl.
5. Pound each of the chicken pieces with a mallet until about 3/8-inch thick. Trim each breast fillet if necessary to help it fit on the bun.
6. Working with one fillet at a time, coat each piece with the flour, then dredge it in the diluted pepper sauce. Coat the chicken once again in the flour mixture and set it aside until the rest of the chicken is breaded.

- 7. Fry the chicken fillets for 8-12 minutes or until they are light brown and crispy. Remove the chicken to a rack or to paper towels to drain.**
 - 8. As chicken is frying, prepare each sandwich by grilling the face of the hamburger buns on a hot skillet over medium heat. Spread about 2 teaspoons of mayonnaise on the face of each of the inverted top buns.**
 - 9. Place a tomato slice onto the mayonnaise, then stack a leaf of lettuce on top of the tomato.**
 - 10. On each of the bottom buns, stack one piece of chicken.**
 - 11. Flip the top half of each sandwich onto the bottom half and serve hot.**
- (<http://www.topsecretrecipes.com>)**
- Makes 4 sandwiches.**